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**Amendments to the Claims**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1-10 (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) A backing plate for use in a friction assembly for a brake, the friction assembly comprising a brake pad which includes the backing plate and a friction material, the backing plate comprising:

a friction supporting surface for supporting the friction material for producing friction when the brake is in use;

a back surface opposite to the friction supporting surface, the back surface being adapted to receive a noise damping shim; and

a first coupler member formed on the back surface for engaging with a second coupler member formed on the noise damping shim, the second coupler member [and] having a rim defining a hole to couple the noise damping shim with the backing plate, the first coupler member having:

a stem adapted to be received in the hole of the second coupler member, the stem having a connection end where the stem is connected to the backing plate and a distal end opposite to the connection end, the stem having a height and an enlarged section having a larger-cross section, wherein the enlarged section is near the distal end of the stem and engages the rim of the second coupler member to prevent disengagement of the shim from the backing plate upon assembly;

a recess surrounding the stem to accept the rim of the second coupler member, the recess having a depth defined by an opening mouth and a bottom.

wherein the height of the stem is less than the depth of the recess such that the distal end of the stem [is] remains within the recess prior to and after coupling of the first and second coupler members.

12-14. (Canceled)

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15. (Currently amended) The backing plate as claimed in claim 11, ~~[14]~~, wherein the stem of the first coupler member is deformed to form the enlarged section prior to assembly of the frictional assembly such that upon assembly of the backing plate, the second coupler member will be attached to the first coupler member by snap fitting the first and second coupler members together.

16-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently amended) A method of assembling a friction system for a brake having a noise dampening shim, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a first coupler member comprising [having] a stem having a region with an enlarged cross-section positioned near a distal end of the stem [,] and a recess surrounding the stem on a back surface of a backing plate for a friction assembly, the friction assembly having:

a friction pad for producing friction when the brake is in use; and

the backing plate having a friction supporting surface for supporting the friction pad and the back surface opposite to the friction supporting surface, [:]

wherein the stem has a height between the distal end and a connection end where the stem is connected to the backing plate, the recess has a depth defined by an opening mouth and a bottom, and the height of the stem is less than the depth of the recess such that the distal end of the stem is within the recess;

providing a second coupler member having a rim defining a hole on the noise dampening shim, the noise dampening shim adapted for engagement with the back surface of the backing plate [the noise-dampening shim having a first surface adapted for engagement with the back surface of the backing plate, and a second surface adapted for receiving a compression force when the brake is in use]; and

snapping in the enlarged section of the stem of the first coupler member into the hole of the second coupler member so that the enlarged section of the stem engages the rim of the hole to couple the noise dampening shim [second coupler member] with the backing plate.

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21. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 20, wherein:

the step for providing the second coupler member provides the hole with an enlarged section; and

the snapping step forces the enlarged section of the stem of the first coupler member into the enlarged section of the hole of the second coupler member so that the enlarged section of the stem of the first coupler member secures the ~~[coupling between the]~~ first coupler member and the second coupler member.

22. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 20, wherein:

the step of providing the first coupler member forms the stem such that a distal end of the stem remains within the recess.

23. (New) A backing plate for use in a friction assembly for a brake, the backing plate comprising:

a friction supporting surface for supporting a friction material; and

a back surface opposite to the friction supporting surface for coupling with a noise-dampening shim, the back surface having:

a stem having a connection end where the stem is connected to the backing plate and a distal end opposite to the connection end, the distal end having an enlarged section with a larger cross-section than the remainder of the stem; and

a recess surrounding the stem, the recess having a depth defined by an opening mouth and a bottom,

wherein the height of the stem is less than the depth of the recess.

24. (New) The backing plate according to claim 23, further comprising a noise-dampening shim member having a rim defining a hole extending from the surface of the shim, wherein the shim is coupled to the backing plate by press-fitting the enlarged portion of the stem into the hole of the rim.

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25. (New) A friction assembly for a brake, the friction assembly comprising:
- the backing plate according to claim 23 having a friction material affixed onto the friction supporting surface; and
  - a noise-dampening shim coupled to the stem of the backing plate.